

State Notes

TOPICS OF LEGISLATIVE INTEREST

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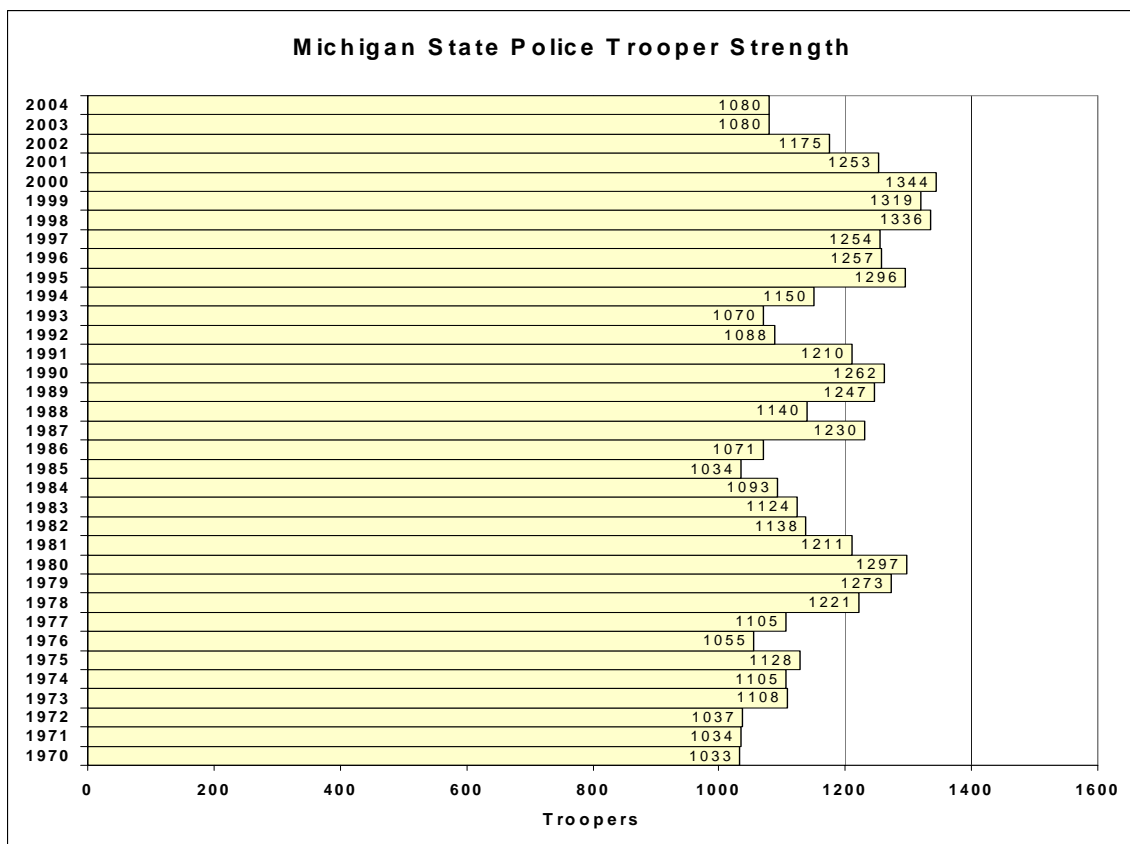


STATE POLICE TROOPER COUNT UPDATE: DECLINE CONTINUES

by Bruce R. Baker, Fiscal Analyst

The number of “at-post troopers”, those Michigan State Police troopers who are assigned to highway patrol and general law enforcement in the State, continues to follow a trend downward. The strength level of troopers, measured by those who serve at the 63 State Police posts and other sites throughout the State, has reached a multiyear low of 1,027 troopers as of this writing. (See [Figure A](#).)

Figure A



Note: Trooper strength numbers reflect totals at the first full pay period in October of each year. The numbers include those troopers at-post and those who are currently enrolled in trooper school. The fiscal year (FY) 2003-04 projection is based on starting FY 2003-04 with 1,080, losing 100 troopers to attrition, and gaining 100 by 2005. The trooper school is to begin in July 2004. School attrition factors would place the expected number of graduates at 85.

A drop in trooper strength is a natural result of the State's not holding a sufficient number of trooper candidate schools to replenish the expected annual attrition of officers from the rank of trooper. (The expected attrition for FY 2004-05 is 80.) There have been no trooper school



graduates since 2001. (See Table 1.) Attrition from the rank of trooper mostly occurs from promotions out of the trooper rank to other functions within the Department, and retirements. (Full retirement for a uniformed member of the State Police is earned after 25 years of service.) The recent 25th anniversaries of trooper schools that graduated 360 candidates back in 1978 have contributed to the reduction in trooper numbers. The State has taken two steps to help bolster the trooper count: the budgeting for a trooper candidate school planned to begin July 18, 2004, and graduate an estimated 85 troopers in December, and the establishment of a Deferred Retirement Option Plan (DROP), created by Public Act 83 of 2004. The candidate school, the 120th to be held by the Department, has \$2.5 million appropriated in FY 2003-04 and \$7.0 million proposed for FY 2004-5 to cover its cost, which primarily consists of salaries of the candidates, who begin receiving pay on day one of the school. The DROP is a program aimed at retirement-eligible officers (currently numbering 144) containing incentives to encourage them to continue serving the State, thereby helping to keep the number of troopers at a higher number than it would be otherwise.

Table 1

Trooper Recruit School Graduations							
Year	Graduates	Year	Graduates	Year	Graduates	Year	Graduates
2005*	85	1996	140	1987	145	1978	360
2004	0	1995	256	1986	155	1977	109
2003	0	1994	69	1985	0	1976	36
2002	0	1993	88	1984	44	1975	46
2001	142	1992	0	1983	0	1974	144
2000	0	1991	0	1982	55	1973	99
1999	212	1990	119	1981	0	1972	180
1998	94	1989	130	1980	0	1971	86
1997	78	1988	95	1979	83	1970	59
* Proposed recruit school to begin July 18, 2004.							